

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
 SS-15 USIA-06 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00
 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 DHA-02 /086 W
 -----271718Z 083853 /43

P R 271533Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8425
INFO AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 3845

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PL
SUBJ: HUNGER STRIKE ANNOUNCED: RAPID GOVERNMENT REACTION

REF: WARSAW 3643 AND PREVIOUS

1. ON MAY 26, ELEVEN PEOPLE WHO BEGAN A HUNGER STRIKE TO PROTEST
REGIME BEHAVIOR FOLLOWING THE JUNE, 1976, PRICE-RISE DISTURBANCES
RELEASED A STATEMENT TO THEIR SPOKESMAN, WIEZ EDITOR TADEUSZ
MAZOWIECKI, AND TO WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS. THE STATEMENT IS
DIRECTED TO THE POLISH COUNCIL OF STATE, THE POLISH EPISCOPATE,
THE WORKERS DEFENSE COMMITTEE, AND PUBLIC OPINION. IT SAYS THAT
THE STRIKE, WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE IN ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH, WARSAW,
FROM MAY 24 UNTIL MAY 31, WAS CHOSEN AS "THE MOST PROPER AND
UNDERSTANDABLE WAY TO POINT OUT THE DANGER AND THE DEEPLY
IMMORAL CHARACTER OF THE VIOLATION OF AND DISRESPECT FOR HUMAN
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DIGNITY, RIGHTS, AND FREEDOMS." REFERRING TO THE EXAMPLES OF
MAHATMA GANDHI AND MARTIN LUTHER KING, AMONG OTHERS, THE SIGNERS
OF THE STATEMENT SUMMARIZE THEIR OBJECTIONS TO THE REGIME'S
TREATMENT OF THE DEMONSTRATORS FOLLOWING THE DISTURBANCES.
THEY SPECIFICALLY MENTION THE FIVE DEMONSTRATORS WHO REMAIN IN
PRISON, AS WELL AS THE MEMBERS OF THE WORKERS DEFENSE COMMITTEE
WHO ARE IN JAIL AND THREATENED BY "YET ANOTHER TRIAL OF INNOCENT

PEOPLE."

2. ON MAY 27, THE MAJOR POLISH DAILIES TRYBUNA LUDU AND ZYCIE WARSZAWY CARRIED EDITORIALS BY PROMINENT JOURNALISTS DOMINIK HORODYNSKI AND ADAM WYSOCKI, CRITICIZING THE WARSAW STRIKERS. THE THEMES OF BOTH EDITORIALS ARE SIMILAR: A SMALL GROUP OF ANTI-POLISH ACTIVISTS HAVE SEIZED UPON A PRETEXT TO EXPLOIT PEOPLE'S FEELINGS AND TO TROUBLE THE GOOD ATMOSPHERE OF CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS AS A MEANS OF PROMOTING THEIR OWN ENDS. THESE "PECULIAR" ENDS, SAYS HORODYNSKI, ARE SOMETIMES FOUNDED ON LITTLE MORE THAN "FRUSTRATION, NARCISSISM, AND SIMPLE PATHOLOGICAL THIRST FOR NOTORIETY."

3. AN EPISCOPATE OFFICIAL TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT HE EXPECTED THE CHURCH WOULD MAKE NO OFFICIAL STATEMENT ABOUT THE HUNGER STRIKE. HE SAID THAT ANY COMMENTARY WOULD MORE LIKELY BE EXPRESSED IN A SERMON BY CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI. "THEY (I.E., THE STRIKERS) ARE THERE BECAUSE EVERYONE IS ALLOWED ACCESS TO THE HOUSE OF GOD," HE SAID.

4. COMMENT: THE UNUSUALLY RAPID OFFICIAL REACTION TO THE HUNGER STRIKE IS A SIGN OF DEEP CONCERN ABOUT CONTINUATION OF THE TENSION WHICH BEGAN WITH THE DEATH OF STANISLAW PYJAS (REF). THE REGIME IS MOVING QUICKLY IN AN EFFORT TO BLOCK THE FIRST PUBLIC ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE WORKERS DEFENSE COMMITTEE. ON ITS SIDE, THE EPISCOPATE IS KEEPING ITS DISTANCE FROM THE HUNGER STRIKERS AND REACTING WITH CAUTION. END COMMENT.
DAVIES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, PRESS COMMENTS, MALNUTRITION, PRICE INDEXES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977WARSAW03845
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770190-0467
Format: TEL
From: WARSAW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977057/aaaaafui.tel
Line Count: 89
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 44803096-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 WARSAW 3643
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2564201
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HUNGER STRIKE ANNOUNCED: RAPID GOVERNMENT REACTION
TAGS: PINT, PL
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/44803096-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009